

Against the Grain

Volume 25 | Issue 1

Article 33

February 2013

Publisher Profile-now publishers

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Recommended Citation

(2013) "Publisher Profile-now publishers," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 33.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6434>

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we have left out the library, and our policies are very customer-centric and focused on the library. These include our liberal *licensing* policies including being an early adopter of SERU, our business model providing for unlimited concurrent access, unlimited downloads, no DRM to make things user-friendly, and perpetual access with no extra fees. We archive our content via Portico. And so on... But many of these policies are based on constant feedback we get from the library community.

When we travel, we spend time speaking with both the academics (authors/end-users) and librarians. Probably 20% of our time is spent meeting librarians. While the library is our most important revenue source, they are an even more important source of ideas and feedback. We also try to attend smaller, more focused library conferences like ACRL, ER&L, NASIG and Charleston. You ask about our “board”... We actually don’t have an advisory board per se. While we have lots of friends who advise us, we have never set up a formal board.

ATG: *What is the access model for libraries that subscribe to your content? IP address? Does now publishers host its own content, or are there aggregators involved? Do libraries have to play a role in hosting content?*

ZR: Access is via IP authentication. We currently host our own content and will be moving to a new platform in the first quarter of 2013. We are pleased to be working with **Semantico** on this, who will redesign and reengineer our existing platform using their highly respected technologies Scholaris and SAMS. Scholaris will vastly improve our discoverability by providing intelligent, full-text search with rich taxonomy support for searching and browsing.

We have licensed our content to aggregators in the past, but question the value of offering our content through these channels going forward. On occasion we found our content sublicensed to other channels that may or may not have been beneficial to our business. As a result, we have terminated our licensing deals effective January 1, 2013, and we will see if we can expand coverage through our platform with **Semantico**.

I am not sure if libraries have a role in hosting content — is this really part of their mission? I do believe the libraries have a role (as do publishers) to make content discoverable. We as publishers need to make it accessible. We deploy certain technologies on our hosting platforms to make our content accessible to librarians and academics, which may work less efficiently if hosting of content was diffused across library hosts. But I am not a techie and could be missing something here.

ATG: *Your content focus is on business and technology. Do you have any plans to expand your list into other subject areas? What can we look for from now publishers in the future?*

against the grain publisher profile

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now publishers

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OFFICERS: Mike Casey, COO and Treasurer; Zac Rolnik, President and CEO.

KEY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: *Foundations and Trends* journals, *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*.

CORE MARKETS/CLIENTELE: ACRL libraries.

NUMBER OF JOURNALS PUBLISHED ANNUALLY: 25 - 20 *Foundations and Trends* and 5 traditional journals.

HISTORY AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR COMPANY/PUBLISHING PROGRAM: **now publishers** is an international publisher of science and technology, dedicated to improving the accessibility of research. An independent company, it was founded in 2004 and continues to deliver on its initial promise of partnering with the research and library communities to help bring about a new era in academic publishing which values editors and authors, deploys a liberal and fair copyright policy, and provides librarians with value for money. The primary mission of **now publishers** is to improve scholarly communication, speed the flow of information, and reward the scientist. The company uses Web-based marketing and manufacturing techniques to minimize costs, allowing for the compensation of authors, editors and reviewers, and passing on cost-savings to librarians.

now publisher's marquee product is *Foundations and Trends*, a unique publishing model focusing on very high-quality reviews, surveys, and tutorials of significant research topics written by the leading lights in their fields. All of the content is stringently peer-reviewed, and the quality control is overseen by world class editors-in-chief and their editorial boards. The authors, editors, and board members are “household names” in their respective fields, and the emphasis is on quality, readability, and timeliness of content. 🐷

ZR: We have been very deliberate in choosing the areas in which we publish. We were looking for robust research areas that were currently not being served by major review/reference publications. We feel that business, economics, computer science, and electrical engineering are active research areas with international markets. We are looking to expand both organically and through partnership with other publishers or societies. Currently, all of the journals that we publish are new and started from scratch. While we would always look to acquire journals from societies and publishers, we find that most of the content available for sale is either of relatively low quality or gets bid up in price by the big publishers. So we focus on organic growth.

Some examples of new growth include expanding in our existing areas as well as launching journals in new areas adjacent to our existing product so we can best serve those markets. In 2014 we will start a set of new *Foundations and Trends* journals in energy including *FnT Energy Markets and Policy*, *FnT in Electric Energy Systems*, and *FnT Renewable Energy*. In addition, we are selectively starting new journals in business and economics including three new journals in 2014 — *Journal of Law, Finance and Accounting* in partnership

with NYU and Harvard Law School, *Review of Behavioral Economics*, and the *Journal of Marketing Behavior* with the European Marketing Academy.

Starting publications in a new area is relatively expensive. You have to hire a publisher, including all associated costs (travel, marketing, etc.) and it can take three years or more until you start to actively publish content — this can easily cost you more than \$250k before you even start to see any revenue. So we have reached out to other publishers or societies who have an existing position in the marketplace to try and “franchise” the concept. We have just signed a deal with **Brill Academic Publishing** to establish a program of reference journals in some areas where they have a strong editorial presence — classics, international law, and linguistics. We are very excited to work with **Brill** in these areas since they have well-respected publishing programs in these areas and have a good reputation in the trade.

ATG: *Why did you name your company “now publishers”? Is NOW an acronym that has special meaning? Does it have a special connotation or speak to what you hope to bring to the industry, researchers, and libraries?*

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